

# COMMERCIAL ONSHORE WIND FARMS: A THREAT TO THE AMENITY OF THE LANDSCAPE

The amount of wind power in the world is increasing quickly. The background for this development is improved technology, decreased costs for the units, and increased concern regarding environmental problems of competing technologies such as fossil fuels. The amount of wind power is not spread equally over the world, so in some areas, there is a comparatively high concentration.

Northern Ireland is richly endowed with renewable energy resources whose exploitation has become a necessity if the challenging targets imposed by the Kyoto Protocol are to be met. Onshore wind energy is the most competitive form of renewable energy in Ireland, but its stochastic nature is a barrier to unlimited development.

This has led to calls of whether this unrestrained form of renewable energy development should be stifled in order to retain the landscape of areas that Northern Ireland is known for worldwide.



Lack wind farm in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland has significant impact on the landscape of the region

However the economic benefits of wind energy can be significant, especially for the communities in which wind projects are sited. Some of these benefits include:

- Investment in local businesses and infrastructure;
- Construction and operations jobs at the wind project site;
- Increases local tax revenues.



The sheer size and span of a wind turbine can have many effects on the environment

On the other hand, other considerations of the effects of wind farms have to be taken into account. The visual impact of wind turbines on the landscape is especially relevant where the surrounding environment is rural, scenic or sensitive in nature. Additionally the tower structure and the rotor blades of wind turbines can cause electromagnetic interference and can potentially “chop TV signals to an irritating degree.” Environmental effects also include disturbances to flora and fauna.

Source: <http://www.globalsiteplans.com/environmental-design/commercial-onshore-wind-farms-a-threat-to-the-amenity-of-the-landscape/>